

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 18, 2022

Tampa Woman Sentenced To Prison For Access Device Fraud And Aggravated Identity Theft Related To COVID Unemployment Insurance Benefits

Tampa, Florida – U.S. District Judge Steven D. Merryday has sentenced Rolanda Wingfield (39, Tampa) to three years in federal prison for access device fraud and aggravated identity theft. As part of her sentence, the court also ordered Wingfield to pay \$135,576 in restitution to the various state workforce agencies she defrauded. Wingfield had pleaded guilty on April 26, 2022.

According to court documents, from approximately May through September 2020, Wingfield obtained the personal identifying information of others and used that information to submit, or cause the submission of, false and fraudulent unemployment insurance (UI) claims to various state workforce agencies in order to obtain UI benefits to which she was not entitled. These UI benefits were then transferred to bank accounts or loaded onto debit cards issued in the names of others. Wingfield then used, or attempted to use, the fraudulently obtained debit cards to withdraw money using ATMs. The U.S. Department of Labor determined that Wingfield obtained \$135,576.

In March 2020, the President signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, which expanded states' ability to provide UI for many workers impacted by COVID-19, including for workers who were not ordinarily eligible for benefits.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at [866-720-5721](tel:866-720-5721) or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Gregory D. Pizzo and John Cannizzaro.

Topic(s):

Coronavirus

Disaster Fraud

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - Florida, Middle](#)